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*AUTHOR:*

DENNIS, JOHN

*TITLE:*

A SPEECH DELIVERED  
BY THE REV. JOHN...

*PLACE:*

TEIGNMOUTH

*DATE:*

1827

Master Negative #

91-80229-5

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936.42 Dennis, Rev. John.

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Speech delivered... on... May 24<sup>th</sup>  
1827, for the purpose of petitioning both  
Houses of parliament, to grant no further con-  
cessions to the Roman catholics.

Teignmouth 1827.

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14 p.

No. 6 of a volume of pamphlets.

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FILM SIZE: 35 mm

REDUCTION RATIO: 11x

IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA IIA IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 9-11-91 INITIALS V.W.D.

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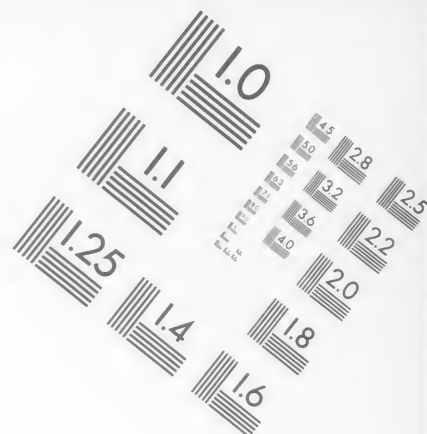
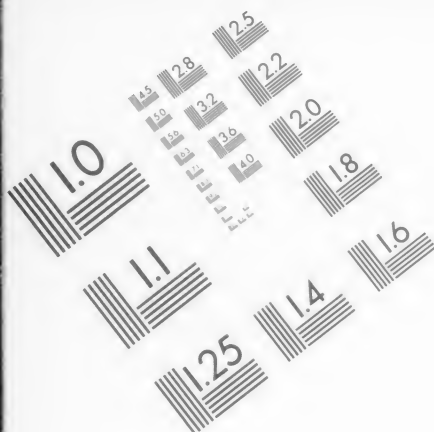


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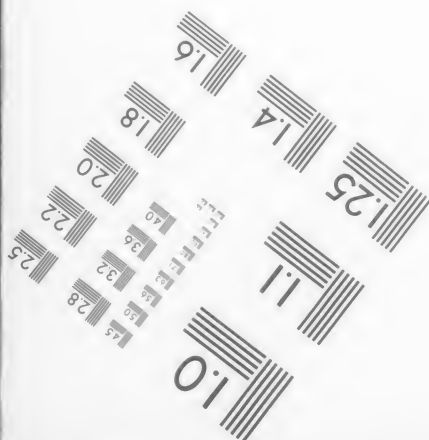
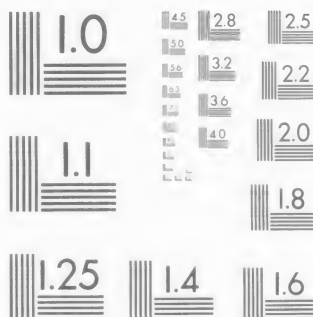
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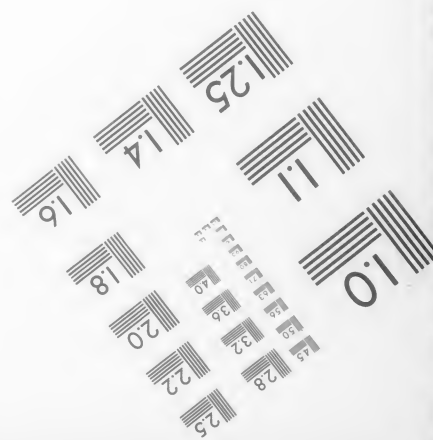
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No. 6.

# A SPEECH

DELIVERED BY

*The Revd. JOHN DENNIS, A. B.*

AT A

MEETING HELD AT TEIGNMOUTH,

*On Thursday, May 24th 1827,*

FOR THE PURPOSE OF PETITIONING BOTH HOUSES  
OF PARLIAMENT, TO GRANT NO FURTHER CONCESSIONS  
TO THE

ROMAN CATHOLICS.



TEIGNMOUTH :

PRINTED AND SOLD AT THE PUBLIC LIBRARY,

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1827.

## A SPEECH.

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MR. CHAIRMAN,

I FEEL a peculiar degree of pleasure and satisfaction in offering to the consideration of this respectable meeting of the Inhabitants of Teignmouth and its vicinity, the petition which I now hold in my hand, because in doing so, I am conscious that I am discharging a sacred duty, which I owe to myself, my family, my country, and my God. In a free state, and under a mixed government, such as that of Great Britain and Ireland, whenever any important measure is discussed in the Senate, it is the privilege of free-born Britons to present petitions either for or against the measure. To prove that the decisions of our Senators are influenced by petitions, I need only appeal to the journals of both Houses of Parliament; I distinctly recollect, when a bill was brought into Parliament a few years since by Lord Sidmouth, which in a very slight degree affected the Dissenting in-



terest, it was immediately withdrawn in consequence of the numerous petitions which were presented against it. But why need I appeal to the journals of the two Houses of Parliament, when the fact is sufficiently obvious to all who now hear me, that I should not have had an opportunity of addressing the inhabitants of Teignmouth and its vicinity a second time upon the subject of Roman Catholic Emancipation, had not the prayer of our last Petition been attended to in the House of Lords?

I congratulate the gentlemen here present, that in some respects we are met this day under more auspicious circumstances, than when we last had occasion to meet for a similar purpose. At that time the question had been carried in the preceding Session in the House of Commons, and it was about to be brought forward by one of its warmest advocates, with the most confident hope of ultimate success. A new parliament has since been called, the question has now been negatived by the Commons, and \*it is intended to be brought forward in the House of Lords by one of its most decided opponents, for the express purpose of setting it at rest for ever. Under these circumstances every petition which is presented against

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\* The author was not aware when he delivered this speech, that the Earl of Mansfield had withdrawn his notice of a motion on the Roman Catholic Question on the 7th of June.

the measure, will strengthen the hands Of the noble Lord who intends to bring it forward, by convincing both Houses of Parliament, that the sentiments of the great majority of the people are decidedly against it.

Sir, I am persuaded that when the Emperor Theodosius went down to the Roman Senate, and proposed for them to determine, whether the worship of Christ or of the Heathen Deities should in future be the established religion of the Roman Empire, he did not bring forward a more important measure, than that which is intended to be brought forward by the *Earl of Mansfield*, on the seventh of June.

The subject of Roman Catholic Emancipation, is viewed in a very different light by the Protestants in England, and the Protestants in Ireland.

Through the kind Providence of God, the Protestants in both countries at present enjoy the free and unrestrained exercise of their holy religion. But as a man who is blessed with perfect health, can scarcely persuade himself that he shall ever lose it: so the Protestants in England can scarcely believe it possible that they shall ever be deprived of the privileges which they now enjoy. But not so the Protestants in Ireland. They see the danger of granting Roman Catholic Emancipation,

because its baneful effects have been already anticipated. They are aware that the Roman Catholics think themselves so sure of obtaining emancipation, that their priests have made out a list of the property which formerly belonged to the Romish Church, in the confident hope of ultimately obtaining possession of it. They are aware that in every Diocese in Ireland, where there is a Protestant Bishop, Dean and Chapter, there is a correspondent Roman Catholic Bishop, Dean and Chapter: and whenever any member of these Chapters dies, the Roman Catholics surreptitiously obtain admission into the Cathedral, and actually install a priest of their own communion into the vacant stall. And above all they are aware of the persecution, and in one instance the † martyrdom, to which the recent converts to the Protestant faith have been subject.

Sir, the greatest statesman which Europe or the world ever produced, was aware of the danger which would await the Protestant Church, if Emancipation were granted. To guard against the danger he proposed certain securities. These securities were rejected by the Roman Catholics, although the Pope had granted them permission to accede to them: and they acted both honestly and honourably in doing so. But I am astonished

† In Ireland, a recent convert to Protestantism was lately hung by his own relatives who were Roman Catholics.

at the blindness of Protestants in not seeing the reason why these securities were rejected. I am astonished that Protestants did not perceive that the Roman Catholics threw off the mask, and by their actions declared "We do not wish to deceive you: we will not give you any securities for the preservation of the Protestant Church, because we intend to effect its destruction, as soon as the power is put into our hands." Sir, the Protestants of Ireland are aware that the train is already laid to blow up the Protestant Church, and that the concession of Roman Catholic Emancipation is looked up to as the match which will fire the train. This is strong language: but I am authorized to use it by *Dr. Doyle's* recent letter to *Lord Farnham*, in which he says, "I think the Church Establishment must fall sooner or later": "the concession of the Catholic Claims, he continues, "would hasten this desirable result."

It is deeply to be lamented that from the poverty of language, the same word is frequently used in different senses, since much confusion and misapprehension have been the necessary consequence. There are two classes of subjects in his Majesty's dominions, the emancipation of whom has occupied the attention of the legislature for more than a quarter of a Century: I mean the negroes in the West Indies, and the Roman Catholics in England and Ireland. If a stranger who was acquainted

with the situation of the negroes, but who knew nothing of the state of the Roman Catholics were told, that the Emancipation of the Roman Catholics was brought forward in the British Parliament with as much earnestness and zeal as the emancipation of the negroes, he would naturally conclude, that both these classes of his Majesty's subjects were similarly circumstanced, and that the Roman Catholics in England and Ireland were equally as much slaves as the negroes in the West Indies.

But how great would be his surprize, when he found, that the Roman Catholics enjoy both civil and religious liberty, and that the only power which is withheld from them is that of filling such offices, as would enable them to deprive the Protestants of this United Kingdom of their religious liberty.

Perhaps I may be thought to have used too broad an expression in saying that the Roman Catholics enjoy both civil and religious liberty; but Dr. Moylan, the titular Bishop of Cork, as long since as 1798, acknowledged this important fact. He said to the Roman Catholics of his Diocese. "Certain privileges excepted, you enjoy the advantages of the constitution, you have the comfort of exercising your holy religion without controul."

There is something so fascinating in the idea of liberty, that our judgments are frequently warped;

and our understandings receive a false bias from the contemplation of it. The abstract proposition, that every class of his Majesty's subjects ought to enjoy an equal degree of liberty, is too self evident to require a single argument to support it. But liberty, in the fullest sense of the word, can only be enjoyed in a savage state. Civil society is an infringement of liberty; but the advantages of civil society, more than counterbalance the loss of absolute liberty. What then is civil; and what is religious liberty? The former consists in the protection of our lives and property, by the laws of the Country in which we live; the latter in the free and unrestrained exercise of religion.

Now, Sir, I would ask, are not the lives and property of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects equally as much protected by the laws of this United Kingdom, as the lives and property of his Majesty's Protestant subjects? And do not the Roman Catholics in Ireland enjoy a privilege, from which the Protestants of England and Scotland are debarred, I mean exemption from all assessed taxes.

As to religious liberty, I am not aware that they do not enjoy the free and unrestrained exercise of their religion, except in two instances in England, and one in Ireland. In England the Roman Catholics are certainly not allowed to call their congregations together by the tolling of a bell: but in

Ireland they enjoy this privilege, which is granted to no other class of Dissenters. But both in England and Ireland they are not allowed to carry a †morsel of bread through the streets under a canopy, and to require every one who meets it to fall down and worship this vegetable God, in the same manner as the Egyptians of old worshipped leeks and onions.

Perhaps it may be thought unwarrantable in me to compare the idolatry of the Roman Catholics with that of the heathen: but it is a notorious fact, that the same image, which was worshipped at Rome as Jupiter, is now by the addition of a ruff turned into an image of St. Peter, and the Pope himself kneels down before it and prays. A gentleman, on whose veracity I can depend, assured me that when he was travelling a few years since in a Popish country, he had a desire to ascend a high mountain, for the purpose of enjoying the extensive prospect which it commanded. To effect this purpose he hired some mules for himself and his companions: but unfortunately the mules grew tired, and were unable to proceed, and the muliteer, instead of giving them some corn, as a Protestant would have done, prayed to their patron saint, St. Nicholas, to assist them. Now, Sir, I would ask, what difference can be discover-

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† The consecrated wafer.

ed between the conduct of this muliteer, and that of the man who prayed to Hercules for assistance, when his cart was stuck fast in a ditch? Both Hercules and St. Nicholas were dead men, and incapable of hearing or answering prayers.

The Roman Catholics attempt to vindicate their worship of §this little ivory God, which I hold in my hand, by saying that they do not mean to worship the image itself, but only the Divine Being which it represents. Why, Sir, this is the very same apology which the heathens offered for their worship of idols. But what excuse can they make for worshipping saints and angels, as if the creature were equally entitled to divine worship with the Creator? Sir, the Roman Catholics exceed the heathen in idolatry: for they not only worship men when they are dead, but they worship a man when he is alive, I mean the Pope.

It may not be generally known, that at the inauguration of every newly elected Pope, his chair is placed upon the high altar in St. Peter's Church at Rome, where, in exact fulfilment of the prediction, and in complete accordance with the description of Antichrist given by St. Paul, || "he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, skewing himself that he is God." And then the

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§ A Crucifix.

|| 2 Thess. 2. v. 4.



Cardinals fall down and worship him, which they call the act of adoration.

But this is not the only occasion on which the Pope receives the adoration of his subjects. For when the ceremony of blessing all the nations upon earth takes place, all the nobility, the military, and the people of Rome, are assembled in the area in front of the Church of St. Peter's. On the tolling of a bell, the Pope comes out from the upper part of the Church on a self-moving throne, with incense fuming around him, in imitation of the Almighty on Mount Sinai. Immediately on his appearance, the assembled multitude fall prostrate on the ground, while he pronounces the blessing.

Sir, if we look at the efforts which are making on the one hand to effect Roman Catholic Emancipation, and at the efforts which are making on the other hand to prevent it, in a *religious* point of view, it is nothing else but a struggle between Christ and Antichrist. If we contemplate them in a *political* point of view, it is in reality a struggle (and I am surprised that the idea has never been suggested in Parliament,) it is a struggle between our Protestant King, and the lineal heir to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland, who is a Roman Catholic. I am surprised that the question has never been asked either in the House of Lords, or in the House of Commons, whether it be possible

in the nature of things, if Roman Catholic Commoners are admitted into the House of Commons, and Roman Catholic Peers into the House of Lords, \*they will be contented to suffer the lineal heir to be excluded from the throne because he is a Roman Catholic?

I have hitherto abstained from alluding to the change which has lately taken place in the Cabinet, because I wish to prove the necessity of petitioning against Roman Catholic Emancipation not from that change, but from the duty by which all Protestants are bound to oppose the growth of Popish superstition and idolatry. I cannot however conclude this address without making a few remarks

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\* It seems to have been entirely forgotten by politicians both in, and out of Parliament, that, "The act of succession gave umbrage to all the Popish Princes who were more nearly allied to the Crown than this Lady, (the Princess Sophia Duchess Dowager of Hanover,) whom the Parliament had preferred to all others: that, The Duchess of Savoy, grand-daughter to King Charles I. by her mother, ordered her Ambassador, Count Maffei, to make a protestation to the Parliament of England, in her name, against all resolutions and decisions contrary to her title, as sole daughter to the Princess Henrietta, next in succession to the Crown of England, after King William and the Princess Anne of Denmark:"—that, "Two copies of this protest Maffei sent in letters to the Lord Keeper and the Speaker of the Lower House, by two of his gentlemen, and a public notary to attest the delivery; but no notice was taken of the declaration." (See *Smollett's Continuation of Hume*, p. 401.) And why was no notice taken of this declaration? Because both Houses of Parliament were at that time composed of *Protestants* only. But should Roman Catholics be admitted into both Houses of Parliament, and should the King of Sardinia (the lineal heir) assert his right to the Crown, would not this right be enforced by all the Roman Catholic members upon the principle of justice?

on this subject. If we look into the natural world, we find that a violent storm is frequently preceded by a dead calm. If we consider the circumstances attending a sea fight, we see that previous to the commencement of the action the most awful silence obtains. And may we not upon the same principle explain the cause, why the loudest advocates for Roman Catholic Emancipation are hushed into a sudden and mysterious silence? May we not conclude that they are only waiting for a convenient opportunity to strike the deadly blow? We must however leave the result in the hands of the great Disposer of all events. But should the Protestant Churches of England and Ireland eventually suffer persecution through the ascendancy, which will be acquired by the Roman Catholics, in the event of Emancipation being granted to them, we shall have the satisfaction of recollecting, that we have availed ourselves of the privilege, which the Constitution allows us, of petitioning to avert that persecution.

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*Vide p. 10.*—Are those Protestants, who advocate the cause of Roman Catholic Emancipation, aware, that should it be granted, the *host* will be carried in procession through the streets, and they and all who meet it, will be required to fall down and worship it?

FINIS.

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CROYDON, PRINTER, &C. TEIGNMOUTH.

